

New Associate Pastor for St. Francis Borgia

Last Saturday, May 21st Archbishop Dolan appointed a newly ordained priest, Father Michael Lightner, 32, as the associate pastor of St. Francis Borgia Parish. I had the honor of attending Father Mike's ordination to the priesthood at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist Saturday, and then concelebrating his 1st Mass at St. Gregory the Great Church in Milwaukee.

Father Mike is from Oconto Falls, Wisconsin, the youngest of six children of Corliss and Joyce Lightner. He attended Oconto High School, and then received a full football scholarship to attend Eastern Michigan University, an NCAA Division I school in Ypsilanti. He was a right tackle. Scouts for the Cleveland Browns, impressed by his long-snapping ability, invited the young Mike to participate in a preseason training camp following his senior year at EMU. But he declined. He was thinking about the priesthood.

He earned a bachelor of fine arts degree, with sculpture as his specialty. Art remains one of his favorite subjects. He has a Master of Divinity degree from Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Maryland.

In making this appointment, Archbishop Dolan wrote to Father Mike,

"It is with a deep sense of joy and confidence that I appoint you associate pastor at St. Francis Borgia Parish in Cedarburg. I am happy to entrust the faithful of this parish to your priestly care in collaboration with the pastor, Father Thomas Eichenberger.

As associate pastor, you are called upon to serve the needs of God's people. Your mission, like my own, is one of teaching, sanctifying, serving, and administrating those areas delegated to you by the pastor... You are asked also to collaborate with the Parish Council, lay leaders, trustees, staff, and those organizations designated to work with you. I trust you will work closely with the priests in the area and enter fully into the archdiocesan planning directives and efforts

It is a privilege to share my ministry with you. May God's blessings fill your life and reward you abundantly, especially as you begin your priesthood. Please know of my abiding gratitude for your vocation."

Welcome, Father Mike Lightner!

Father Eichenberger

- Written by Fr. Tom Eichenberger for the St. Francis Borgia parish bulletin, May 29, 2005.